A DECLARATION OF THE FAITH and ORDER Owned and practised in the Congregational Churches IN ENGLAND;

Agreed upon and consented unto By their

ELDERS and MESSENGERS IN

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A PREFACE.

Confeſſion of the *Faith* that is in us, when juſtly called for, is ſo indiſpenſable a due all owe to the Glory of the Soveraign GOD, that it is ranked among the Duties of the firſt Commandment, ſuch as Prayer is; and therefore by *Paul* yoaked with Faith it ſelf, as neceſſary to ſalvation: *With the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation.* Our Lord Chriſt himſelf, when he was accuſed of his Doctrine, conſidered ſimply as a matter of fact by preaching, refuſed to anſwer; becauſe, as ſuch, it lay upon evidence, and matter of teſtimony of others; unto whom therefore he refers himſelf: But when both the High Prieſt and *Pilate* expoſtulate his Faith, and what he held himſelf to be; he without any demur at all, cheerfully makes declaration, That he *was the Son of GOD*; ſo to the *High Prieſt*: And that he was a *King*, and *born to be a King*; thus to *Pilate*; though upon the uttering of it his life lay at the ſtake: Which holy profeſſion of his is celebrated for our example, 1 *Tim.* 6. 13.

Confeſſions, when *made by a company* of profeſſors of Chriſtianity joyntly meeting to that end, the moſt genuine and natural uſe of ſuch *Confeſſions* is, That under the ſame form of words, they expreſs the ſubſtance of the ſame *common ſalvation*, or *unity of their faith*; whereby *ſpeaking the ſame things, they ſhew themſelves perfectly joyned in*

1 Cor. 1. 10. *the ſame minde, and in the ſame judgement.*

And accordingly ſuch a tranſaction is to be looked upon but as a meet or fit *medium* or *means* whereby to expreſs *that* their *common faith and ſalvation*, and no way to be made uſe of as an *impoſition* upon any: Whatever is of force or conſtraint in matters of this nature, cauſeth them to degenerate from the *name* and *nature* of *Confeſſions*, and turns them from being *Confeſſions of Faith*, into *exactions* and *impoſitions of Faith*.

And ſuch *common Confeſſions* of the Orthodox Faith, made in ſimplicity of heart by any ſuch Body of Chriſtians, with concord among themſelves, ought to be entertained by all others that *love the truth as it is in Jeſus*, with an anſwerable *rejoycing*: For if the unanimous opinions and aſſertions but in ſome few points of Religion, and that when Acts 15. by two Churches, namely, that of *Jeruſalem*, and the *Meſſengers of Antioch* met, aſſiſted by ſome of the *Apoſtles*, were by the Believers of thoſe times received with ſo much joy, (as it is ſaid, *They rejoyced for the conſolation*) much more this is to be done, when the *whole* ſubſtance of Faith, and *form of wholſome words* ſhall be declared by the Meſſengers of a multitude of Churches, though wanting thoſe advantages of counſel and authority of the *Apoſtles*, which *that Aſſembly* had.

Which acceptation is then more ſpecially due, when theſe ſhall (to chooſe) utter and declare their Faith, in the ſame *ſubſtance* for matter, yea, *words*, for the moſt part, that other Churches and Aſſemblies, reputed the *moſt Orthodox*, have done before them: For upon ſuch a correſpondency, all may ſee *that* actually accompliſhed, which the Apoſtle did but exhort unto, and pray for, in thoſe *two* more eminent Churches of the *Corinthians* and the *Romans*,

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(and so in them for all the Christians of his time) that both *Jew* and *Gentile*, that is, men of different perswasions, (as they were) *might glorifie GOD with one minde and with one mouth.* And truly, the very turning of the Gentiles to the owning of the same Faith, in the substance of it, with the Christian Jew (though differing in greater points then we do from our brethren) is presently after dignified by the Apostle with this stile, That it is the *Confession of Jesus Christ himself*; not as the *Object* onely, but as the *Author* and *Maker* thereof: *I will confess to thee* (saith Christ to God) *among the Gentiles.* So that in all such accords, *Christ* is the *great and first Confessor*; and we, and all our Faith uttered by us, are but the *Epistles*, (as *Paul*) and *Confessions* (as *Isaiah* there) of *their Lord and ours*; He, but expressing what is written in his heart, through their hearts and mouthes, *to the glory of God the Father*: And shall not we all *rejoyce* herein, when as Christ himself is said to do it upon this occasion: as it there also follows, *I will sing unto thy Name.* Rom. 15. 6, 8, 9. v. 9.

Further, as the *soundnes* and *wholsomnes of the matter* gives the *vigor* and *life* to such *Confessions*, so the *inward freenes*, *willingnes* and *readines* of the spirits of the *Confessors* do contribute the *beauty* and *lovelines* thereunto: as it is in *Prayer* to God, so in *Confessions* made to men. *If two or three met, do agree*, it renders both, to either the more acceptable. The *Spirit of Christ* is in himself too *free*, great and generous a Spirit, to suffer himself to be used by any humane arm, to whip men into belief; he drives not, but *gently leads into all truth*, and *perswades* men to *dwell in the tents* of *like precious Faith*; which would lose of its preciousnes and value, if that sparkle of freenes shone not in it: The character of his people, is to be a *willing people in the day of his*

power, (not Mans) *in the beauties of holiness*, which are the Assemblings of the Saints: one glory of which Assemblings in that first Church, is said to have been, *They met with one accord*; which is there in that Psalm propheſied of, in the instance of that first Church, for all other that should succeed.

And as this great Spirit is in himself free, when, and how far, and in whom to work; so where and when he doth work, he carrieth it with the same freedom, and is said to be a *free Spirit*, as he both is, and works in us: And where this *Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*.

Now, as to this *Confession* of ours, besides, that a conspicuous conjunction of the particulars mentioned, hath appeared therein: There are also *four remarkable Attendants* thereon, which added, might perhaps in the eyes of sober and indifferent spirits, give the whole of this Transaction a room and rank amongst other many good and memorable things of this age; at least all set together, do cast as clear a gleam and manifestation of Gods Power and Presence, as hath appeared in any such kinde of *Confessions*, made by so numerous a company these later years.

The first, is the *Temper*, (or distemper rather) of the *times*, during which, these *Churches* have been gathering, and which they have run through. All do (out of a general sense) complain that the times have been *perillous*, or *difficult times*; (as the Apostle foretold) and that in respect to danger from *seducing spirits*, more perillous then the hottest seasons of Perfecution. We have sailed through an Æstuation, Fluxes and Refluxes of great varieties of Spirits, Doctrines, Opinions and Occurrences; and especially in the matter of Opinions, which have been accompanied

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in their ſeveral ſeaſons, with powerful perſwaſions and temptations, to ſeduce thoſe of our way. It is known men have taken the freedom (notwithſtanding what Authority hath interpoſed to the contrary) to vent and vend their own vain and accurſed imaginations, contrary to the great and fixed Truths of the Goſpel, inſomuch, as take the whole round and circle of deluſions, the Devil hath in this ſmall time, ran, it will be found, that every truth, of greater or leſſer weight, hath by one or other hand, at one time or another, been queſtioned and called to the Bar amongſt Us, yea, and impleaded, under the pretext (which hath ſome degree of Juſtice in it) that all ſhould not be bound up to the Traditions of former times, nor take Religion upon truſt.

Whence it hath come to paſs, that many of the ſoundeſt Profeſſors were put upon a new ſearch and diſquiſition of ſuch truths, as they had taken for granted, and yet had lived upon the comfort of: to the end they might be able to convince others, and eſtabliſh their own hearts againſt that darkneſs and unbelief, that is ready to cloſe with error, or at leaſt to doubt of the truth, when error is ſpeciouſly preſented. And hereupon we do profeſſedly account it one of the greateſt advantages gained out of the temptations of theſe times; yea the honor of the Saints and Miniſters of theſe Nations, That after they had ſweetly been exerciſed in, and had improved *practical* and *experimental Truths*, this ſhould be their further lot, to examine and diſcuſs, and indeed, anew to learn over every *Doctrinal Truth*, both out of the Scriptures, and alſo with a freſh taſte thereof in their own hearts; which is no other then what the Apoſtle exhorts to, *Try all things, hold faſt that which is good.* *Converſion* unto God at *firſt*, what is it elſe then

then a *savory* and *affectionate application*, and the bringing home to the heart with spiritual *light* and *life*, all *truths* that are necessary to salvation, together with other *lesser truths?* all which we had afore conversion taken in but notionally from common education and tradition.

Now that after this first gust those who have bin thus converted should be put upon a new probation and search out of the Scriptures, not onely of all principles explicitely ingredients to Conversion; (unto which the Apostle referreth the *Galatians* when they had diverted from them) but of all other superstructures as well as fundamentals; and together therewith, anew to experiment the power and sweetness of all these in their own souls: What is this but *tryed Faith* indeed? and equivalent to a new conversion unto the truth? *An Anchor* that is proved to be *sure* and *stedfast*, that will certainly hold in all contrary storms: This was the eminent seal and commendation which those holy Apostles that lived and wrote last; *Peter*, *John* and *Jude*; in their Epistles did set and give to the *Christians* of the latter part of those *primitive times*. And besides, it is clear and evident by all the other Epistles, from first to last, that it cost the Apostles as much, and far more care and pains to preserve them they had converted, *in the truth*, then they had taken to turn them thereunto at first: And it is in it self as great a work and instance of the power of God, that *keeps*, yea, *guards us through faith unto salvation*.

This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you Gal. 5. 8.

1 Pet. 1, 5.

Secondly, let this be added, (or superadded rather) to give full weight and measure, even to running over) that we have all along this season, held forth (though quarreled with for it by our brethren) this great principle of these times, *That amongst all Christian States and Churches, there ought*

ought to be vouchsafed a forbearance and mutual indulgence unto Saints of all perswasions, that keep unto, and hold fast the necessary foundations of faith and holiness, in all other matters *extrafundamental*, whether of Faith or Order.

This to have been our constant principle, we are not ashamed to confess to the whole Christian world. Wherein yet we desire we may be understood, not as if in the *abstract* we stood indifferent to falshood or truth, or were careless whether faith or error, in any Truths but fundamental, did obtain or not, so we had our liberty in our petty and smaller differences: or as if to make sure of that, we had cut out this wide cloak for it: No, we profess that the whole, and every particle of that Faith delivered to the Saints, (the substance of which we have according to our light here professed) is, as to the propagation and furtherance of it by *all Gospel-means*, as precious to us as our lives; or what can be supposed dear to us; and in our sphere we have endeavored to promote them accordingly: But yet withall, we have and do contend, (and if we had all the power which any, or all of our brethren of differing opinions have desired to have over us, or others, we should freely grant it unto them all) we have and do contend for this, That *in the concrete*, the persons of all such gracious Saints, they and their errors, as they are in them, when they are but such errors as do and may stand with communion with Christ, though they should not repent of them, as not being convinced of them to the end of their days; that those, with their errors (that are purely spiritual, and intrench and overthrow not civil societies,) as *concrete with their persons*, should for Christs sake be born withall by all Christians in the world; and they notwithstanding be permitted to enjoy all Ordinances and spiritual Priviledges according to their light, as

freely

freely as any other of their brethren that pretend to the greateſt Orthodoxity; as having as equal, and as fair a right in and unto Chriſt, and all the holy things of Chriſt, that any other can challenge to themſelves.

And this doth afford a full and invincible teſtimony on our behalf, in that whiles we have ſo earneſtly contended for this juſt liberty of Saints in all the Churches of Chriſt, *we our ſelves have had no need of it*: that is as to the *matter* of the profeſſion of *Faith* which we have maintained together with others: and of this, this ſubſequent Confeſſion of Faith gives ſufficient evidence. So as we have the confidence in Chriſt, to utter in the words of thoſe two great Apoſtles, That *we have ſtood faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free* (in the behalf of others, rather then our ſelves) and having been *free*, *have not made* uſe of out *liberty* for *a cloak of error or maliciouſneſs* in our ſelves: And yet, loe, whereas from the beginning of the rearing of theſe Churches, that of the Apoſtle hath been (by ſome) prophecyed of us, and applyed to us, *That whiles we promiſed* (unto others) *liberty*, *we our ſelves would become ſervants of corruption, and be brought in bondage* to all ſorts of fancies and imaginations; yet the whole world may now ſee after the experience of many years ran through (and it is manifeſt by this Confeſſion) that the great and gracious God hath not onely kept us in that common unity of the Faith and Knowledge of the Son of God, which the whole Community of Saints have and ſhall in their generations come unto, but alſo in the ſame Truths, both ſmall and great, that are built thereupon, that any other of the beſt and more pure Reformed Churches in their beſt times (which were their firſt times) have arrived unto: This Confeſſion withall holding forth a profeſſed oppoſition unto the common errors and hereſies of theſe times.

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These *two considerations* have been taken from *the seasons* we have gone through.

Thirdly, let the *space of time it self*, or days, wherein from first to last the whole of this Confession was framed and consented to by the whole of us, be duly considered by sober and ingenuous spirits: the whole of days in which we had meetings about it, (set aside the two Lords days, and the first days meeting, in which we considered and debated what to pitch upon) were but eleven days, part of which also was spent by some of us in prayer, others in consulting, and in the end all agreeing. We mention this small circumstance but to this end, (which still adds unto the former) That it gives demonstration, not of our *freeness* and *willingness* onely, but of our *readiness* and *preparedness* unto so great a work; which otherwise, and in other Assemblies, hath ordinarily taken up long and great debates, as in such a variety of matters of such concernment, may well be supposed to fall out. And this is no other then what the Apostle *Peter* exhorts unto, *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason or account of the hope that is in you.* The Apostle *Paul* saith of the spiritual Truths of the Gospel, *That God hath prepared them for those that love him.* The inward and innate constitution of the new creature being in it self such as is suted to all those Truths, as congenial thereunto: But although there be this mutual *adaptness* between these two, yet such is the mixture of ignorance, darkness and unbelief, carnal reason, preoccupation of judgement, interest of parties, wantonness in opinion, proud adhering to our own perswasions, and perverse oppositions and averseness to agree with others, and a multitude of such like distempers *common to believing men*: All which are not onely mixed with, but at times, (especially in such

1 Pet. 3. 15.
1 Cor. 2.

such times as have passed over our heads) are ready to overcloud our judgements, and do cause our eyes to be double, and sometimes prevail as well as lusts, and do byas our wills and affections: And such is their mixture, that although there may be existent an habitual preparedness in mens spirits, yet not always a present readiness to be found, specially not in such a various multitude of men, to make a solemn and deliberate profession of all truths, it being as great a work to finde the spirits of the just (perhaps the best) of Saints, ready for every truth, as *to be prepared to every good work.*

It is therefore to be looked at as a great and special work of the holy Ghost, that so numerous a company of Ministers, and other principal brethren, should so *readily, speedily* and *joynly* give up themselves unto such a whole Body of *Truths that are after godliness.*

This argues they had not their faith to seek; but, as is said of *Ezra*, that *they* were *ready Scribes*, and (as Christ) *instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*, being as the good *housholders* of so many families of Christ, *bringing forth of their store and treasury New and Old.* It shews these truths had been familiar to them, and they acquainted with them, as with their *daily food and provision*, (as Christs allusion there insinuates) in a word, that *so they had preached*, and that *so their people had believed*, as the Apostle speaks upon one like particular occasion. And the Apostle *Paul* considers (in cases of this nature) *the suddenness* or *length of the time*, either one way or the other; whether it were in mens *forsaking* or *learning* of the truth. Thus the *suddenness* in the *Galatians* case in leaving the truth, he makes a wonder of it: *I marvel that you are* SO SOON (that is, in so short a time) *removed from the true Gospel unto another.* Again on the contrary, in the *Hebrews* he aggravates their backwardness,

Gal. 1.6.

wardneſs, *That when for the time you ought to be Teachers, you had need that one teach you the very firſt principles of the Oracles of God.* The Parable contrary to both theſe having fallen out in this tranſaction, may have ſome ingredient and weight with ingenuous ſpirits in its kinde, according to the proportion is put upon either of theſe forementioned in their adverſe kinde, and obtain the like ſpecial obſervation. Heb. 5. 12.

This accord of ours hath fallen out without having *held any correſpondency together*, or prepared conſultation by which we might come to be adviſed of one anothers mindes. We alledge not this as a matter of commendation in us; no, we acknowledge it to have been a great neglect: And accordingly one of the *firſt propoſals* for union amongſt us was, That there might be a conſtant correſpondence held among the Churches for counſel and mutual edification, ſo for time to come to prevent the like omiſſion.

We confeſs that from the firſt, every, or at leaſt the generality of our Churches, have been in a maner like ſo many Ships (though holding forth the ſame general colours) lancht ſingly, and ſailing apart and alone in the vaſt Ocean of theſe tumultuating times, and they expoſed to every wind of Doctrine, under no other conduct then the Word and Spirit, and their particular Elders and principal Brethren, without Aſſociations among our ſelves, or ſo much as holding out common lights to others, whereby to know where we were.

But yet whileſt we thus confeſs to our own ſhame this neglect, let all acknowledge, that God hath ordered it for his high and greater glory, in that his ſingular care and power ſhould have ſo watcht over each of theſe, as that all ſhould be found to have ſteered their courſe by the ſame

Chart, and to have been bound for one and the ſame Port, and that upon this general ſearch now made, that the ſame holy and bleſſed Truths of all ſorts, which are currant and warrantable amongſt all the other Churches of Chriſt in the world, ſhould be found to be our Lading.

The whole, and every of theſe things when put together, do cauſe us (whatever men of prejudiced and oppoſite ſpirits may finde out to ſlight them) with a holy admiration, to ſay, That *this is no other* then *the Lords doing*; and which we with thankſgiving do take from his hand as a ſpecial *token upon us for good*, and doth *ſhew that God is faithful* and *upright* towards *thoſe that are planted in his houſe*: And that as the *Faith* was but *onte* for all, and intentionally *firſt delivered unto the Saints*; ſo the *Saints*, when not abiding ſcattered, but gathered under their *reſpective Paſtors* according to *Gods heart into an houſe*, and Churches unto the *living God*, ſuch *together* are, as *Paul* foreſpake it, the moſt ſteady and firm *pillar* and *ſeat of Truth* that God hath any where appointed to himſelf on earth, where his truth is beſt conſerved, and publiquely held forth; there being in ſuch Aſſemblies weekly *a rich dwelling of the Word amongſt them*, that is, a daily open houſe kept by the means of thoſe good *Houſholders*, their Teachers and other Inſtructers reſpectively appropriated to them, whom Chriſt in the vertue of his *Aſcenſion*, continues to *give as gifts* to his people, himſelf *dwelling amongſt* them; to the end that by this, as the moſt ſure ſtanding permanent means, *the Saints might be perfected, till we all* (even all the Saints in preſent and future ages) do come by this conſtant and daily Ordinance of his unto *the unity of the Faith and Knowledge of the*

Son

Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (which though growing on by parts and piecemeal, will yet appear compleat, when *that great and general Assembly* shall be gathered, then when this world is ended, and these dispensations have had their fulness and period) and *so that from henceforth* (such a provision being made for us) *we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine.* Eph. 4. 12. 14.

And finally, this doth give a fresh and recent demonstration, that the *great Apostle* and *High-priest of our profession* is indeed *ascended* into heaven, and continues there with power and care, *faithful as a son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoycing of the hope firm unto the end:* and shews that he will, as he hath promised, be with his own Institutions to the end of the world. Heb. 3. 6.

It is true, that many sad miscarriages, divisions, breaches, fallings off from holy Ordinances of God, have along this time of tentation, (especially in the beginning of it) been found in some of our Churches; and no wonder, if what hath been said be fully considered: Many reasons might further be given hereof, that would be a sufficient Apology, without the help of a retortion upon other Churches (that promised themselves peace) how that more destroying ruptures have befallen them, and that in a wider sphere and compass; which though it should not justifie us, yet may serve to stop others mouthes.

Let *Rome* glory of the peace in, and *obedience* of her children, against the Reformed *Churches* for their divisions that

occurred

curred (especially in the first rearing of them) whilest we all know the causes of their dull and stupid peace to have been carnal interests, worldly correspondencies, and coalitions strengthened by gratifications of all sorts of men by that Religion, the principles of blinde Devotion, Traditional Faith, Ecclesiastical Tyranny, by which she keeps her children in bondage to this day. We are also certain, that the very same prejudice that from hence they would cast upon the Reformed (if they were just) do lye as fully against those pure Churches raised up by the Apostles themselves in those first times: for as *we have heard of their patience*, sufferings, consolations, and the transcending gifts poured out, and graces shining in them, *so we have heard complaints* of their *divisions* too, of the *forsakings of their Assemblies*, as the custom or *maner of SOME was* (which later were in that respect *felones de se*, and needed no other *delivering up to Satan* as their punishment, then what they executed upon themselves.) We read of the *shipwrack* also of *Faith* and a *good Conscience*, and *overthrowings of the faith of SOME*; and still but of *some*, not *all*, nor the *most*: which is one piece of an Apologie the Apostle again and again inserts to future ages, and through mercy we have the same to make.

Heb. 10. 22.

And truly we take the confidence professedly to say, that these tentations common to the purest *Churches* of *Saints separated from the mixture of the world*, though they grieve us (for *who is offended, and we burn not?*) yet they do not at all stumble us, as to the truth of our way, had they been many more: We say it again, these stumble us no more (as to that point) then it doth offend us against the power of Religion it self, to have seen, and to see daily in *particular persons called out and separated from the world*

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by an effectual work of conversion, that they for a *while do suffer* under disquietments, vexations, turmoils, unsettlements of spirit, that they are tossed with tempests and horrid tentations, such as they had not in their former estate, whilst they *walked according to the course of this world*: For *Peter* hath sufficiently instructed us whose business it is to raise such storms, even the *Devil's*; and also whose designe it is, that *after they have suffered a while*, thereby they shall be *setled, perfected, stablished*, that have so suffered, even *the God of all Grace*. And look what course of dispensation God holds to *Saints personally*, he doth the like to *bodies of Saints* in *Churches*, and the Devil the same for his part too: And that consolatory Maxim of the Apostle, *God shall tread down Satan under your feet shortly*, which *Paul* uttereth concerning the Church of *Rome*, shews how both *God* and *Satan* have this very hand therein; for he speaks that very thing in reference unto their divisions, as the coherence clearly manifests; and so you have both designs expresst at once.

Yea, we are not a little induced to think, that the *divisions*, breaches, *&c.* of those *primitive Churches* would not have been so frequent among the people themselves, and not the Elders onely, had not the freedom, liberties and rights of the Members (the Brethren, we mean) been stated and exercised in those Churches, the same which we maintain and contend for to be in ours.

Yea (which perhaps may seem more strange to many,) had not those Churches been constituted of Members inlightned further then with notional and traditional knowledge, by a new and more powerful light of the *Holy Ghost*, wherein *they had been made partakers of the holy Ghost, and the heavenly gift, and their hearts had tasted the good Word of*

God,

God, and the Powers of the world to come, and of such Members at lowest, there had not fallen out those kindes of divisions among them.

For experience hath shewn, that the common sort of meer *Doctrinal Professors* (such as the most are now a days) whose highest elevation is but *freedom from moral scandal joyned* with *devotion* to Christ through meer education, such as in many *Turks* is found towards *Mahomet*, that these finding and feeling themselves not much concerned in the *active part* of *Religion*, so they may have the honor (especially upon a Reformation of a new Refinement) that themselves are approved Members, admitted to the Lords Supper, and their children to the Ordinance of Baptism; they *regard not other matters* (as *Gallio* did not) but do easily and readily give up themselves unto their Guides, being like dead fishes carried with the common stream; whereas those that have a further renewed light by a work of the holy Ghost, whether *saving* or *temporary*, are upon the quite contrary grounds apt to be busie about, and inquisitive into, what they are to receive and practise, or wherein their consciences are professedly concerned and involved: And thereupon they take the freedom to *examine* and *try the spirits*, *whether of God or no*: And from hence are more apt to dissatisfaction, and from thence to run into division, and many of such proving to be inlightned but with a *temporary*, not saving *Faith* (who have such a work of the Spirit upon them, and profession in them, as will and doth approve it self to the judgement of Saints, and ought to be so judged, until they be otherwise discovered) who at long run, prove hypocrites through indulgence unto lusts, and then out of their lusts persist

to

to hold up theſe diviſions unto breach of, or departings from Churches, and the Ordinances of God, and *God is even* with them for it, *they waxing worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*; and even many of thoſe that are ſincere, through a mixture of darkneſs and erroneouſneſs in their judgements, are for a ſeaſon apt out of conſcience *to be led away with the error of others, which lie in wait to deceive.*

Inſomuch as the Apoſtle upon the example of thoſe firſt times, foreſeeing alſo the like events in following generations upon the like cauſes, hath been bold to ſet this down as a *ruled Caſe*, that likewiſe in other Churches ſo conſtituted and *de facto* empriviledged as that of the Church of *Corinth* was (which ſingle Church, in the ſacred Records about it, is the compleateſt Mirror of Church-Conſtitution, Order and Government, and events thereupon enſuing, of any one Church whatever that we have ſtory of.) his Maxim is, *There muſt be alſo diviſions* amongſt you; he ſedly inſerts an [*ALSO*] in the caſe, as that which had been in his own obſervation, and that which would be ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ the fate of other Churches like thereunto, *ſo propheſieth he*: And he ſpeaks this as peremptorily as he doth elſewhere in that other, *We muſt through many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: Yea, and that *all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall ſuffer perſecution*: There is a [*MUST*] upon both alike, and we bleſs God, that we have run through both, and do ſay, and we ſay no more, *That as it was then, ſo it is now*, in both reſpects.

However, ſuch hath been the powerful hand of Gods Providence in *theſe*, which have been the worſt of our *Tryals*, That out of an approved experience and obſervation

of the iſſue, we are able to adde that other part of the Apoſtles Prediction, That therefore *ſuch rents muſt be, that they which are approved may be made manifeſt among you*; which holy iſſue God (as having aimed at it therein) doth frequently and certainly bring about in Churches, as he doth bring upon them that other fate of diviſion. Let them therefore look unto it, that are the *Authors of ſuch diſturbances*, as the Apoſtle warneth, *Gal.* 5. 10. The *experiment is this*, That we have ſeen, and do daily ſee, that multitudes of holy and precious ſouls, and (in the holy Ghoſts word) *approved Saints*, have been, and are the more rooted and grounded by means of theſe ſhakings, and do continue to cleave the faſter to Chriſt, and the purity of his Ordinances, and value them the more by this coſt God hath put them to for the enjoying of them, *who having been planted in the Houſe of the Lord, have flouriſhed in the Courts of our God*, in theſe evil times, to *ſhew that the Lord is upright*. And this experimented event from out of ſuch diviſions, hath more confirmed us, and is a lowder Apologie for us, then all that our oppoſites are able from our breaches to alleadge to prejudice us.

We will add a few words for *concluſion*, and give a more particular account of this our *DECLARATION*. In drawing up this *Confeſsion of Faith*, we have had before us the *Articles of Religion*, approved and paſſed by both Houſes of *Parliament*, after advice had with an *Aſſembly of Divines*, called together by them for that purpoſe. To which Confeſſion, for the ſubſtance of it, we fully aſſent, as do our Brethren of *New-England*, and the Churches alſo of *Scotland*, as each in their general Synods have teſtified.

June 20. 1648.

A few things we have added for obviating some erroneous opinions, that have been more broadly and boldly here of late maintained by the Asserters, then in former times; and made other additions and alterations in *method*, here and there, and some clearer explanations, as we found occasion.

We have endeavored throughout, to hold to such Truths in this our Confession, as are more properly termed *matters of Faith*; and what is of *Church-order*, we dispose in certain Propositions by it self. To this course we are led by the Example of the Honorable *Houses of Parliament*, observing what was established, and what omitted by them in that *Confession* the Assembly presented to them. Who thought it not convenient to have matters of *Discipline* and *Church-Government* put into a *Confession of Faith*, especially such particulars thereof, as then were, and still are controverted and under dispute by men Orthodox and sound in Faith. The 30th *cap.* therefore of that Confession, as it was presented to them by the Assembly, which is of *Church-Censures*, their *Use*, *Kindes*, and in *whom placed*: As also *cap.* 31. of *Synods* and *Councels*, by *whom* to be *called*, of *what force* in their *decrees* and *determinations*. And the 4th *paragr.* of the 20th *cap.* which determines what *opinions* and practises *disturb the peace* of the Church, and how such disturbers ought to *be proceeded against* by the *Censures of the Church*, and punished by the *Civil Magistrate*. Also a great part of the 24th *cap. of Marriage* and *Divorce*. These were such doubtful assertions, and so unsutable to a Confession of Faith, as the *Honorable Houses* in their great Wisdom thought fit to lay them aside: There being nothing that tends more to heighten dissentings among Brethren,

then to determine and adopt the *matter* of their *difference*, under ſo high a title, as to be an *Article* of *our Faith*: So that there are two whole Chapters, and ſome Paragraphs in other Chapters in their Confeſſion, that we have upon this account omitted; and the rather do we give this notice, becauſe that Copy of the Parliaments, followed by us, is in few mens hands; the other as it came from the *Aſſembly*, being approved of in *Scotland*, was printed and haſtened nto the world before the *Parliament* had declared their Reſolutions about it; which was not till *June* 20. 1648. and yet hath been, and continueth to be the Copy (ordinarily) onely ſold, printed and reprinted for theſe *eleven* years.

Aug. 1647

After the 19th *cap. of the Law*, we have added a *cap. of the Goſpel*, it being a Title that may not well be omitted in a Confeſſion of Faith: In which Chapter, what is diſperſed, and by intimation in the Aſſemblies Confeſſion with ſome little addition, is here brought together, and more fully under one head.

That there are not Scriptures annexed as in ſome Confeſſions (though in divers others it's otherwiſe) we give the ſame account as did the *Reverend Aſſembly* in the ſame caſe: which was this; *The Confeſſion being large, and ſo framed, as to meet with the common errors, if the Scriptures ſhould have been alleadged with any clearneſs, and by ſhewing where the ſtrength of the proof lieth, it would have required a volume.*

S. ſſion 786.

We ſay further, it being our utmoſt end in this (as it is indeed of a *Confeſſion*) humbly to give an account what we hold and aſſert in theſe matters, that others, eſpecially the Churches of Chriſt may judge of us accordingly.

This

This we aimed at, and not so much to instruct others, or convince gainsayers. These are the proper works of other institutions of Christ, and are to be done in the strength of expres Scripture. *A Confession* is an Ordinance of another nature.

What we have laid down and asserted about *CHURCHES* and their *Government*, we humbly conceive to be the *Order* which Christ himself hath appointed to be observed, we have endeavored to follow Scripture-light, and those also that went before us according to that Rule, desirous of neareſt uniformity with *reforming Churches*, as with our Brethren in *New England*, so with others, that differ from them and us.

The Models and Platforms of this subject laid down by learned men, and practised by Churches, are various: We do not judge it *brotherly*, or *grateful*, to insist upon comparisons as some have done; but this experience teacheth, That the *variety*, and possibly the *disputes* and *emulations* arising thence, have much strengthened, if not fixed, this unhapy perswasion in the minds of some learned and good men, namely, *That there is no settled Order laid down in Scripture*; but it's left to the prudence of the Christian Magistrate, to compose or make choice of such a Form as is most suitable and consistent with their Civil Government. Where this opinion is entertained in the perswasion of Governors, there Churches asserting their Power and Order to be *jure divino*, and the appointment of Jesus Christ, can have no better nor more honorable entertainment, than a Toleration or Permission.

Yet herein there is this remarkable advantage to all

parties

parties that differ, about what in Government is of Christs appointment; in that such *Magistrates* have a far greater latitude in conscience, to tolerate and permit the several forms of each so bound up in their perswasion, then *they* have to submit unto what the Magistrate shall impose: And thereupon the Magistrate exercising an indulgency and forbearance, with protection and encouragement to the people of God, so differing from him, and amongst themselves: Doth therein discharge as great a faithfulness to Christ, and love to his people, as can any way be supposed and expected from any Christian Magistrate, of what perswasion soever he is. And where this clemency from Governors is shewed to any sort of persons or Churches of Christ upon such a principle, it will in equity produce this just effect, That all that so differ from him, and amongst themselves, standing in equal and alike difference from the principle of such a Magistrate, he is equally free to give a like liberty to them, one as well as the other.

This faithfulness in our Governors we do with thankfulness to God acknowledge, and to their everlasting honor, which appeared much in the late Reformation. The *Hierarchie*, *Common-prayer-book*, and all other things grievous to Gods people, being removed, they made choice of an Assembly of learned men, to advise what Government and Order is meet to be established in the room of these things; and because it was known there were different opinions (as always hath been among Godly men) about forms of Church-Government, there was by the *Ordinance* first sent forth to call an Assembly, not onely a choice made of persons of several perswasions to sit as *Members* there, but liberty given, to a *lesser number*, if dissenting,

dissenting, to report their Judgements and Reasons, as well and as freely as the *major part*.

Hereupon the Honorable House of Commons (an Indulgence we hope will never be forgotten) finding by papers received from them, that the Members of the Assembly were not like to compose differences amongst themselves, so as to joyn in the same Rule for Church-Government, did Order further as followeth: **That a Committee of Lords and Commons, &c. do take into consideration the differences of the Opinions in the Assembly of Divines in point of Church-Government, and to endeavor a union if it be possible; and in case that cannot be done, to endeavor the finding out some way, how far tender consciences, who cannot in all things submit to the same Rule which shall be established, may be born with according to the Word, and as may stand with the publique peace.**

By all which it is evident the Parliament purposed not to establish the Rule of Church-Government with such rigor, as might not permit and bear with a practise different from what they had established: In persons and Churches of different principles, if occasion were. And this Christian clemency and indulgence in our Governors, hath been the foundation of that *Freedom and Liberty*, in the managing of Church-affairs, which *our Brethren*, as well as *WE*, that differ from them, do now, and have many years enjoyed.

The Honorable Houses by several Ordinances of Parliament after much consultation, having settled Rules for

for Church-Government, and *ſuch an Eccleſiaſtical Order* as they judged *would beſt joynt with the Laws and Government of the Kingdom*, did publiſh them, requiring the practiſe hereof throughout the Nation; and in particular, by the Miniſters of the Province of *London*. But (upon the former reaſon, or the like charitable conſideration) theſe *Rules* were not impoſed by them under any *PENALTI* or rigorous inforcement, though frequently urged thereunto by ſome.

Ordinance of March 14. 1645.

Our reverend Brethren of the Province of *London*, having conſidered of theſe Ordinances, and the Church-Government laid down in them, declared their opinions to be, *That there is not a compleat rule in thoſe Ordinances*; alſo, *that there are many neceſſary things not yet eſtabliſhed, and ſome things wherein their conſciences are not ſo fully ſatisfied.* Theſe Brethren in the ſame paper, have publiſhed alſo their joynt *Reſolution to practiſe in all things according to the rule of the Word, and according to theſe Ordinances, ſo far as they conceive them correſpond to it, and in ſo doing they truſt they ſhall not grieve the ſpirit of the truly godly, nor give any juſt occaſion to them that are contrary mindcd, to blame their proceedings.*

Conſiderations and Cautions from Sion Coll. June 19. 1646.

We humbly conceive (that *WE* being diſſatisfied in theſe things as our Brethren) the like liberty was intended by the honorable Houſes, and may be taken by us of the *Congregational way* (without blame or grief to the ſpirits of thoſe *Brethren* at leaſt) to reſolve, or rather to continue in the ſame reſolution and practiſe in theſe matters, which indeed were our practiſes in times of greateſt oppoſition, and before this reformation was begun.

And as our Brethren *the Miniſters of London*, drew up and publiſhed their *opinions* and *apprehenſions* about Church-

Church-Government into an intire Syſtem; ſo we now give the like publique account of our conſciences, and the rules by which we have conſtantly practiſed hitherto; which we have here drawn up, and do preſent. Whereby it will appear how much, or how little we differ in theſe things from our Presbyterian Brethren.

And we truſt there is no juſt cauſe why any man, either for our differing from the preſent ſettlement, it being out of conſcience, and not out of *contempt*, or our differences one from another, being not *wilful*, ſhould charge either of us with that odious reproach of *Schiſm*. And indeed, if not for our differing from the State-ſettlement, much leſs becauſe we differ from our Brethren, our differences being *in ſome leſſer things, and circumſtances* onely, as themſelves acknowledge. And let it be further conſidered, that we have not broken from them or their Order by theſe differences (but rather they from us) and in that reſpect we leſs deſerve their cenſure; our practiſe being no other then what it was in our breaking from Epiſcopacy, and long before Presbytery, or any ſuch form as now they are in, was taken up by them; and we will not ſay how probable it is that the yoke of Epiſcopacy had been upon our neck to this day, if ſome ſuch way (as formerly, and now is, and hath been termed *Schiſm*) had not with much ſuffering bin then practiſed & ſince continued in.

Jus divinum Miniſt. pub. by the Provoſt of London, in the Preface.

For *Novelty*, wherewith we are likewiſe both charged by the enemies of both, it is true, in reſpect of the publique and open profeſſion, either of Presbytery or Independency, this Nation hath been a ſtranger to each way, it's poſſible ever ſince it hath been Chriſtian; though for our ſelves we are able to trace the footſteps of an Independent Congregational way in the ancienteſt cuſtoms of

the Churches, as also in the writings of our soundest Protestant Divines, and (that which we are much satisfied in) a full concurrence throughout in all the substantial parts of Church-Government, with our Reverend Brethren the *old Puritan non-Conformists*, who being instant in prayer and much sufferings, prevailed with the Lord, and we reap with joy, what they sowed in tears. Our Brethren also that are for Presbyterial subordinations, profess what is of weight against *Novelty* for their way.

Puritanis-Ang. by Dr. Aims near 50 years since, as the opinions of Whitehead, Gilbe, Fox, Dearing, Greenham, Cartwright, Venner, Fulk, Whitaker, Rainold, Perkins, &c.

And now therefore seeing the Lord, in whose hand is the heart of Princes, hath put into the hearts of our Governors to tolerate and permit (as they have done many years) persons of each perswasion, to enjoy their consciences, though neither come up to the *Rule established by Authority*: And that which is more, to give us both protection, and the same encouragement that the most devoted *Conformists* in those former superstitious times enjoyed, yea, and by a publique Law to establish this Liberty for time to come; and yet further, in the midst of our fears, to set over us a *Prince* that owns this Establishment, and cordially resolves to secure our Churches in the enjoyment of these Liberties, if we abuse them not to the disturbance of the Civil Peace.

This should be a very great engagement upon the hearts of all, though of different perswasions, to endeavor our utmost, *joyntly* to promove the honor and prosperity of such a Government and Governors by whatsoever means, which in our Callings as Ministers of the Gospel, and as Churches of Jesus Christ the Prince of peace, we are any way able to; as also to be peaceably disposed one

toward

towards another, and with mutual toleration to love as brethren, notwithstanding such differences, remembring, as it's very equal we should, the differences that are between *Presbyterians* and *Independents*, being differences between fellow-servants, and neither of them having authority given from God or man, to impose their opinions, one more then the other. That our Governors after so solemn an establishment, should thus bear with us both, in our greater differences from their Rule, and after this, for any of us *to take a fellow-servant by the throat*, upon the account of a lesser reckoning, and nothing due to *him* upon it: is to forget, at least not to exercise, that compassion and tenderness we have found, where we had less ground to challenge or expect it.

Our Prayer unto God is, That *whereto we have* already *attained, we* all *may walk by the same rule*, and that *wherein we are otherwise minded*, God would reveal it to us in his due time.

Books sold by *John Allen* at the Sun Rising in *Pauls* Church-yard, viz.

Mr. *Caryls* fifth Volume on the Book of *Job*, in quarto.

Mr. *Caryls* seventh Volume on the Book of *Job*, in quarto.

Bezæ Novum Testamentum, in folio.

Mr. *Allens* Scripture Chronology, in quarto.

Mr. *Baxters* Call to the Unconverted.

Mr. *Cotton* on the Covenant, intended suddenly for the Press.

Mr. *Lukins* Practice of Godliness.

Mr. *Burgess* of Original sin.

Pareus on the *Revelation*, in folio.

Mr. *Gataker* against Judicial Astrology, wherein he proves it to be the way and practice of Heathens, and ought not to be so much as named by them that profess the Name of Christ. *Esay* 47. 12, 13. *Jer.* 10. 2.

The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of *Piemont*, containing a most exact Description of the Place, and a faithful Account of the Doctrine, Life and Persecutions of the ancient Inhabitants, together with a most naked and punctual Relation of the late Bloody Massacre 1655. and a Narrative of all the following Transactions to 1658. justifi'd partly by divers ancient Manuscripts, written many hundred years before *Calvin* or *Luther*. By *Samuel Morland* Esq; in folio.

The humbled sinner resolved what he should do to be saved: or Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the onely way of Salvation, by Mr. *Obadiah Sedgwick*, in quarto.

The Riches of Grace displayed in the offer and tender of Salvation to poor sinners, by the same Author, in twelves.

The Fountain opened, and the Water of Life flowing forth, for the refreshing of thirsty sinners, by the same Author, quarto.

The Gospels Glory, without prejudice to the Law, shining forth in the Glory of God the Father, Son and holy Ghost, for the salvation of sinners, by Mr. *Richard Byfield*, in octavo.

A DECLARATION OF THE FAITH and ORDER Owned and practised in the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES IN ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

Of the holy Scripture.

ALthough the Light of Nature, and the Works of Creation and Providence, do so far manifest the Goodness, Wisdom and Power of God, as to leave men unexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his Will, which is necessary unto salvation: Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times, and in divers maners to reveal himself, and to declare that his Will unto his Church; and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan

and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing: which maketh the holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of Gods revealing his Will unto his people, being now ceased.

II.

Under the name of holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the Books of the Old and New Testament, which are these,

Of the Old Testament.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Of the New Testament.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Pauls Epistle to the Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 To Timothy, 2 To Timothy, To Titus, To Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The Epistle of James, The first and second Epistles of Peter, The first, second and third Epistles of John, The Epistle of Jude, The Revelation.

All

All which are given by the inspiration of God to be the Rule of Faith and Life.

III.

The Books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of Divine inspiration, are no part of the Canon of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of, then other humane writings.

IV.

The Authority of the holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the Testimony of any man or Church; but wholly upon God (who is Truth it self) the Author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

V.

We may be moved and induced by the Testimony of the Church, to an high and reverent esteem of the holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the Matter, the efficacy of the Doctrine, the majesty of the Style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, (which is, to give all glory to God) the full discovery it makes of the only way of Mans Salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the intire perfection thereof, are Arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence it self to be the Word of God; Yet notwithstanding, our full perswasion and assurance of the infallible Truth and Divine Authority thereof, is from the inward work of the holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

VI.

The whole Counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own Glory, mans Salvation, Faith and Life, is either expresly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new Revelations of the Spirit, or Traditions of men. Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: And that there are some circumstances concerning the Worship of God and Government of the Church, common to humane actions and Societies, which are to be ordered by the Light of Nature and Christian prudence, according to the general Rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

VII.

All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for Salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not onely the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

VIII.

The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the Native Language of the people of God of old) and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of writing of it was most generally known to the Nations) being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence

kept

kept pure in all Ages, are therefore Authentical; so as in all Controversies of Religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them. But because these Original Tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them; therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every Nation unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable maner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.

IX.

The infallible Rule of Interpretation of Scripture, is the Scripture it self; And therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one) it must be searched and known by other places, that speak more clearly.

X.

The Supreme Judge by which all controversies of Religion are to be determined, and all Decrees of Councels, Opinions of ancient Writers, Doctrines of men and private Spirits, are to be examined, and in whose Sentence we are to rest, can be no other, but the holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit; into which Scripture so delivered, our Faith is finally resolved.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of God and of the holy Trinity.

THere is but one onely living and true God, who is infinite in Being and Perfection, a moſt pure Spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or paſſions, immutable, immenſe, eternal, incomprehenſible, almighty, moſt wiſe, moſt holy, moſt free, moſt abſolute, working all things according to the Counſel of his own immutable and moſt righteous Will, for his own Glory, moſt loving, gracious, merciful, long-ſuffering, abundant in goodneſs and truth, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin, the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, and withal, moſt juſt and terrible in his Judgements, hating all ſin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

II.

God hath all Life, Glory, Goodneſs, Bleſſedneſs, in, and of himſelf; and is alone, in, and unto himſelf, All-ſufficient, not ſtanding in need of any Creatures, which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but onely manifeſting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: He is the alone Fountain of all Being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, and hath moſt Soveraign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatſoever himſelf pleaſeth: In his ſight all things are open and manifeſt, his Knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, ſo as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain: He is moſt holy in all his Counſels, in all his Works, and in all his Commands.

To

To him is due from Angels and Men, and every other Creature, whatsoever Worship, Service or Obedience, as Creatures, they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them.

III.

In the Unity of the God-head there be three Persons, of one Substance, Power, and Eternity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the holy Ghost: The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; The Son is eternally begotten of the Father; The holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. Which Doctrine of the Trinity is the foundation of all our Communion with God, and comfortable Dependence upon him.

CHAP. III.

Of Gods eternal Decree.

GOd from all eternity did by the most wise and holy Counsel of his own Will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: Yet so, as thereby neither is God the Author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the Creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second Causes taken away, but rather established.

II.

Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed Conditions, yet hath he not decreed any thing, because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such Conditions.

III. By

III.

By the Decree of God for the manifestation of his Glory, some Men and Angels are predestinated unto everlasting Life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting Death.

IV.

These Angels and Men thus predestinated, and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

V.

Those of mankinde that are predestinated unto Life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his Will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting Glory, out of his meer free Grace and Love, without any fore-sight of Faith or good Works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the Creature, as Conditions or Causes moving him thereunto, and all to the praise of his glorious Grace.

VI.

As God hath appointed the Elect unto Glory, so hath he by the eternal and most free purpose of his Will fore-ordained all the means thereunto: Wherefore they who are elected, being faln in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto Faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power, through Faith, unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, or effectually called,

called, juſtified, adopted, ſanctified, and ſaved, but the Elect onely.

VII.

The reſt of mankinde God was pleaſed, according to the unſearchable Counſel of his own Will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as he pleaſeth, for the glory of his ſoveraign power over his Creatures, to paſs by and to ordain them to diſhonor and wrath for their ſin, to the praiſe of his glorious Juſtice.

VIII.

The Doctrine of this high myſtery of Predeſtination, is to be handled with ſpecial prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may from the certainty of their effectual Vocation, be aſſured of their eternal Election. So ſhall this Doctrine afford matter of praiſe, reverence and admiration of God, and of humility, diligence and abundant conſolation to all that ſincerely obey the Goſpel.

CHAP. IV.

Of Creation.

IT pleaſed God the Father, Son and holy Ghoſt, for the manifeſtation of the glory of his eternal Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether viſible or inviſible, in the ſpace of ſix days, and all very good.

II.

After God had made all other creatures, he created Man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal Souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, after his own Image, having the Law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own Will, which was subject unto change. Besides this Law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil; which whiles they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the Creatures.

CHAP. V.

Of Providence.

God the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures, actions and things from the greatest even to the least by his most wise and holy Providence, according unto his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own Will, to the praise of the glory of his Wisdom, Power, Justice, Goodness and Mercy.

II.

Although in relation to the fore-knowledge and decree of God, the first Cause, all things come to pass immutably, and infallibly; yet by the same Providence he ordereth them

them to fall out, according to the nature of second Causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.

III.

God in his ordinary Providence maketh use of Means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them at his pleasure.

IV.

The almighty Power, unsearchable Wisdom, and infinite Goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his Providence, in that his determinate Counsel extendeth it self even to the first Fall, and all other sins of Angels and Men (and that not by a bare permission) which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth in a manifold Dispensation to his own most holy ends; yet so, as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth onely from the Creature, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is, nor can be the author or approver of sin.

V.

The most wise, righteous and gracious God doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations, and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption, and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled, and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for sundry other just and holy ends.

VI.

As for those wicked and ungodly men, whom God as a righteous Judge, for former sins, doth blinde and harden, from them he not onely withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been inlightned in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects, as their corruption makes occasions of sin; and withal gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan; whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softning of others.

VII.

As the providence of God doth in general reach to all Creatures, so after a most special maner it taketh care of his Church, and disposeth all things to the good thereof.

CHAP. VI.

Of the fall of Man, of Sin, and of the Punishment thereof.

God having made a Covenant of Works and Life, thereupon, with our first Parents and all their posterity in them, they being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, did wilfully transgress the Law of their Creation, and break the Covenant in eating the forbidden fruit.

II. By

II.

By this sin they, and we in them, fell from original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

III.

They being the Root, and by Gods appointment standing in the room and stead of all mankinde, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.

IV.

From this Original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite to all good, and wholly enclined to all evil, do proceed all Actual transgressions.

V.

This Corruption of nature during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both it self and all the motions thereof are truely and properly sin.

VI.

Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous Law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the Law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal and eternal.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of Gods Covenant with Man.

THe distance between God and the Creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of life, but by some voluntary condescension on Gods part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of Covenant.

II.

The first Covenant made with man, was a Covenant of Works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

III.

Man by his fall having made himself uncapable of life by that Covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace, wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life, his holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.

IV.

This Covenant of Grace is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the name of a Testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ the Testator, and to the everlasting Inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.

V. Al-

V.

Although this Covenant hath been differently and variously administred in respect of Ordinances and Institutions in the time of the Law, and since the coming of Christ in the flesh; yet for the substance and efficacy of it, to all its spiritual and saving ends, it is one and the same; upon the account of which various dispensations, it is called the Old and New Testament.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Christ the Mediator.

IT pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to chuse and ordain the Lord Jesus his onely begotten Son, according to a Covenant made between them both, to be the Mediator between God and Man; the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Savior of his Church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the World; unto whom he did from all eternity give a people to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

II.

The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him Mans nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary of her substance: So that two whole perfect

fect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the Manhood, were inseparably joyned together in one Person, without conversion, composition, or confusion; which Person is very God and very Man, yet one Christ, the onely Mediator between God and Man.

III.

The Lord Jesus in his Humane nature, thus united to the Divine in the Person of the Son, was sanctified and anointed with the holy Spirit above measure, having in him all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, to the end that being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of Grace and Truth, he might be throughly furnished to execute the Office of a Mediator and Surety; which Office he took not unto himself, but was thereunto called by his Father, who also put all Power and Judgement into his hand, and gave him Commandment to execute the same.

IV.

This Office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake; which that he might discharge, he was made under the Law, and did perfectly fulfil it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have born and suffered, being made sin and a curse for us, enduring most grievous torments immediately from God in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body, was crucified, and died, was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption, on the third day he arose from the dead with the same Body in which he suffered, with which also he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father, making intercession, and shall return to judge Men and Angels at the end of the world.

V. The

V.

The Lord Jesus by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the Justice of God, and purchased not onely reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the Kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.

VI.

Although the work of Redemption was not actually wrought by Christ, till after his Incarnation; yet the vertue, efficacy and benefits thereof were communicated to the Elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those Promises, Types and Sacrifices wherein he was revealed and signified to be the seed of the Woman, which should bruise the Serpents head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, being yesterday and to day the same, and for ever.

VII.

Christ in the work of Mediation acteth according to both Natures, by each Nature doing that which is proper to it self; yet by reason of the unity of the Person, that which is proper to one Nature, is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the Person denominated by the other Nature.

VIII.

To all those for whom Christ hath purchased Redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them, and revealing unto them in and by the Word, the mysteries of salva-

tion, effectually perſwading them by his Spirit to believe and obey, and governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit, overcoming all their enemies by his almighty Power and Wiſdom, in ſuch maner and ways as are moſt conſonant to his wonderful and unſearchable diſpenſation.

CHAP. IX.

Of Free-will.

God hath endued the Will of man with that natural liberty and power of acting upon choice, that it is neither forced, nor by any abſolute neceſſity of Nature determined to do good or evil.

II.

Man in his ſtate of Innocency had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleaſing to God; but yet mutably, ſo that he might fall from it.

III.

Man by his fall into a ſtate of ſin, hath wholly loſt all ability of will to any ſpiritual good accompanying ſalvation; ſo as a natural man being altogether averſe from that good, and dead in ſin, is not able by his own ſtrength to convert himſelf, or to prepare himſelf thereunto.

IV.

When God converts a ſinner, and tranſlates him into the ſtate of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under ſin, and by his grace alone inables him freely to will

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and to do that which is ſpiritually good; yet ſo, as that by reaſon of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly nor onely will that which is good, but doth alſo will that which is evil.

V.

The will of Man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone in the ſtate of Glory onely.

CHAP. X.

Of Effectual Calling.

ALl thoſe whom God hath predeſtinated unto life, and thoſe onely, he is pleaſed in his appointed and accepted time effectually to call by his Word and Spirit, out of that ſtate of ſin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, inlightning their mindes ſpiritually and ſavingly to underſtand the things of God, taking away their heart of ſtone, and giving unto them an heart of fleſh, renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jeſus Chriſt; yet ſo, as they come moſt freely, being made willing by his grace.

II.

This effectuall Call is of Gods free and ſpecial grace alone, not from any thing at all foreſeen in man, who is altogether paſſive therein, untill being quickned and renewed by the holy Spirit he is thereby enabled to anſwer this Call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

III.

Elect Infants dying in Infancy, are regenerated and ſaved by Chriſt, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaſeth: ſo alſo are all other elect perſons who are uncapable of being outwardly called by the Miniſtery of the Word.

IV.

Others not elected, although they may be called by the Miniſtry of the Word, and may have ſome common operations of the Spirit, yet not being effectually drawn by the Father, they neither do nor can come unto Chriſt, and therefore cannot be ſaved; much leſs can men not profeſſing the Chriſtian Religion, be ſaved in any other way whatſoever, be they never ſo diligent to frame their lives according to the Light of Nature, and the Law of that Religion they do profeſs; And to aſſert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be deteſted.

CHAP. XI.

Of Juſtification.

THoſe whom God effectually calleth, he alſo freely juſtifieth, not by infuſing righteouſneſs into them, but by pardoning their ſins, and by accounting and accepting their perſons as righteous, not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Chriſts ſake alone; nor by imputing Faith it ſelf, the act of believing, or any other Evangelical obedience to them, as their righteouſneſs, but by imputing Chriſts active obedience unto the whole Law, and

paſsive

passive obedience in his death for their whole and sole righteousness, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by Faith; which Faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

II.

Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ, and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead Faith, but worketh by Love.

III.

Christ by his Obedience and Death did fully discharge the Debt of all those that are justified, and did by the sacrifice of himself, in the blood of his Cross, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto them, make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to Gods Justice in their behalf: Yet in as much as he was given by the Father for them, and his Obedience and Satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for any thing in them, their justification is onely of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.

IV.

God did from all eternity decree to justifie all the Elect, and Christ did in the fulness of time dye for their sins, and rise again for their justification: Nevertheless, they are not justified personally, until the holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them.

V. God

V.

God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may by their sins fall under Gods fatherly displeasure: and in that condition they have not usually the light of his Countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

VI.

The justification of Believers under the old Testament, was in all these respects one and the same with the justification of Believers under the new Testament.

CHAP. XII.

Of Adoption.

ALl those that are justified, God vouchsafeth in and for his onely Son Jesus Christ to make partakers of the grace of Adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and priviledges of the Children of God, have his Name put upon them, receive the Spirit of Adoption, have access to the Throne of Grace with boldness, are enabled to cry Abba Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by him as by a father, yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of Redemption, and inherit the promises as Heirs of everlasting Salvation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Sanctification.

I. They that are united to Christ, effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, through the vertue of Christs death and resurrection, are also further sanctified really and personally through the same vertue, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakned, and mortified, and they more and more quickned, and strengthned in all saving graces, to the practice of all true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

II. This Sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life, there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a continual and irreconcileable war, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

III. In which war, although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail, yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome, and so the Saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Of saving Faith.

THe grace of Faith, whereby the Elect are inabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the Ministery of the Word, by which also and by the administration of the Seals, Prayer, and other means, it is increased and strengthened.

II.

By this Faith a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the Authority of God himself speaking therein, and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth, yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatnings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving Faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by vertue of the covenant of Grace.

III.

This Faith, although it be different in degrees, and may be weak or strong, yet it is in the least degree of it different in the kind or nature of it (as is all other saving grace) from the faith and common grace of temporary believers; and therefore, though it may be many times assailed and weakened, yet it gets the victory, growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our Faith.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of Repentance unto life and ſalvation.

SUch of the Elect as are converted at riper years, having ſometime lived in the ſtate of nature, and therein ſerved divers luſts and pleaſures, God in their effectual calling giveth them Repentance unto life.

II.

Whereas there is none that doth good, and ſinneth not, and the beſt of men may through the power and deceitfulneſs of their corruptions dwelling in them, with the prevalency of temptation, fall into great ſins and provocations; God hath in the covenant of Grace mercifully provided, that Believers ſo ſinning and falling, be renewed through repentance unto Salvation.

III.

This ſaving Repentance is an Evangelical Grace, whereby a perſon being by the holy Ghoſt made ſenſible of the manifold evils of his ſin, doth by Faith in Chriſt humble himſelf for it with godly ſorrow, deteſtation of it, and ſelf-abhorrency, praying for pardon and ſtrength of Grace, with a purpoſe and endeavor by ſupplies of the Spirit, to walk before God unto all well-pleaſing in all things.

IV.

As Repentance is to be continued through the whole courſe of our lives, upon the account of the body of death, and the motions thereof; ſo it is every mans duty to repent of his particular known ſins particularly.

V.

Such is the provision which God hath made through Christ in the covenant of Grace, for the preservation of Believers unto salvation, that although there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation; yet there is no sin so great, that it shall bring damnation on them who truly repent; which makes the constant preaching of Repentance necessary.

CHAP. XVI.

Of good Works.

GOod works are onely such as God hath commanded in his holy Word, and not such as without the warrant thereof are devised by men out of blinde zeal, or upon any pretence of good intentions.

II.

These good Works done in obedience to Gods commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively Faith, and by them Believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edifie their Brethren, adorn the profession of the Gospel, stop the mouthes of the adversaries, and glorifie God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end eternal life.

III. Their

III.

Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ: And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do, of his good pleasure; yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty, unless upon a special motion of the Spirit, but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.

IV.

They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more then God requires, as that they fall short of much, which in duty they are bound to do.

V.

We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them, and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us, and God, whom by them we can neither profit, nor satisfie for the debt of our former sins; but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants: and because as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit, and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of Gods judgement.

VI.

Yet notwithstanding, the persons of Believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him, not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreproveable in Gods sight; but that he looking upon them in his Son is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.

VII.

Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and to others: yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by Faith, nor are done in a right maner, according to the Word, nor to a right end, the glory of God; they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, nor make a man meet to receive grace from God; and yet their neglect of them is more sinful, and displeasing unto God.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the Perseverance of the Saints.

THey whom God hath accepted in his beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

II. This

II.

This Perseverance of the Saints depends not upon their own free-will, but upon the immutability of the Decree of Election, from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father, upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ, and union with him, the Oath of God, the abiding of his Spirit, and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the Covenant of Grace, from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

III.

And though they may through the temptation of Satan, and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein, whereby they incur Gods displeasure, and grieve his holy Spirit, come to have their graces and comforts impaired, have their hearts hardned, and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgements upon themselves; yet they are and shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation.

ALthough temporary believers, and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes, and carnal presumptions of being in the favor of God, and state of salvation, which hope of theirs shall perish; yet such

ſuch as truely believe in the Lord Jeſus, and love him in ſincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conſcience before him, may in this life be certainly aſſured that they are in the ſtate of Grace, and may rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God, which hope ſhall never make them aſhamed.

II.

This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable perſwaſion, grounded upon a fallible hope, but an infallible aſſurance of faith, founded on the blood and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, revealed in the Goſpel, and alſo upon the inward evidence of thoſe graces unto which promiſes are made, and on the immediate witneſs of the Spirit, teſtifying our Adoption, and as a fruit thereof, leaving the heart more humble and holy.

III.

This infallible Aſſurance doth not ſo belong to the eſſence of Faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it; yet being inabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may without extraordinary revelation in the right uſe of ordinary means attain thereunto: And therefore it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election ſure, that thereby his heart may be inlarged in peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt, in love and thankfulneſs to God, and in ſtrength and chearfulneſs in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this aſſurance; ſo far is it from inclining men to looſneſs.

IV. True

IV.

True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished and intermitted, as by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience, and grieveth the Spirit, by some sudden or vehement temptation, by Gods withdrawing the light of his countenance, suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness, and to have no light; yet are they neither utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of Faith, that love of Christ and the Brethren, that sincerity of heart and conscience of duty, out of which by the operation of the Spirit this assurance may in due time be revived, and by the which in the mean time they are supported from utter despair.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Law of God.

God gave to Adam a Law of universal obedience written in his heart, and a particular precept of not eating the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, as a Covenant of Works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact and perpetual obedience, promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatned death upon the breach of it, and indued him with power and ability to keep it.

II.

This Law so written in the heart, continued to be a per-

fect

fect Rule of righteousness after the fall of man, and was delivered by God upon mount Sinai in ten Commandments, and written in two Tables; the four first Commandments containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man.

III.

Beside this Law commonly called Moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel Ceremonial Laws, containing several Typical Ordinances, partly of Worship, prefiguring Christ, his Graces, Actions, Sufferings and Benefits, and partly holding forth divers Instructions of Moral Duties: All which Ceremonial Laws being appointed onely to the time of Reformation, are by Jesus Christ the true Messiah and onely Law-giver, who was furnished with power from the Father for that end, abrogated and taken away.

IV.

To them also he gave sundry Judicial Laws, which expired together with the State of that people, not obliging any now by vertue of that Institution, their general equity onely being still of moral use.

V.

The Moral Law doth for ever binde all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not onely in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the Authority of God the Creator, who gave it: neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.

VI. Al-

VI.

Although true believers be not under the Law, as a Covenant of Works, to be thereby juſtified or condemned; yet it is of great uſe to them as well as to others, in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the Will of God, and their duty, it directs and bindes them to walk accordingly, diſcovering alſo the ſinful pollutions of their nature, hearts and lives, ſo as examining themſelves thereby, they may come to further conviction of humiliation for, and hatred againſt ſin, together with a clearer ſight of the need they have of Chriſt, and the perfection of his obedience. It is likewiſe of uſe to the regenerate, to reſtrain their corruptions, in that it forbids ſin, and the threatnings of it ſerve to ſhew what even their ſins deſerve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curſe thereof threatned in the Law. The promiſes of it in like maner ſhew them Gods approbation of obedience, and what bleſſings they may expect upon the performance thereof, although not as due to them by the Law, as a Covenant of Works; ſo as a mans doing good, and refraining from evil, becauſe the Law incourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the Law, and not under Grace.

VII.

Neither are the forementioned uſes of the Law contrary to the grace of the Goſpel, but do ſweetly comply with it, the Spirit of Chriſt ſubduing and inabling the will of man to do that freely and chearfully, which the will of God revealed in the Law required to be done.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Gospel, and of the extent of the Grace thereof.

THe Covenant of Works being broken by sin, and made unprofitable unto life, God was pleased to give unto the Elect the promise of Christ, the seed of the woman, as the means of calling them, and begetting in them Faith and Repentance: In this promise the Gospel, as to the substance of it, was revealed, and was therein effectual for the conversion and salvation of sinners.

II.

This promise of Christ, and salvation by him, is revealed onely in and by the Word of God; neither do the works of Creation or Providence, with the Light of Nature, make discovery of Christ, or of Grace by him, so much as in a general or obscure way; much less that men destitute of the revelation of him by the Promise or Gospel, should be enabled thereby to attain saving Faith or Repentance.

III.

The revelation of the Gospel unto sinners, made in divers times, and by sundry parts, with the addition of Promises and Precepts for the obedience required therein, as to the Nations and persons to whom it is granted, is meerly of the Soveraign will and good pleasure of God, not being annexed by vertue of any promise to the due improvement

provement of mens natural abilities; by vertue of common light received without it, which none ever did make or can ſo do: And therefore in all ages the Preaching of the Goſpel hath been granted unto perſons and nations, as to the extent or ſtraitning of it, in great variety, according to the counſel of the will of God.

IV.

Although the Goſpel be the onely outward means of revealing Chriſt and ſaving Grace, and is as ſuch abundantly ſufficient thereunto; yet that men who are dead in treſpaſſes, may be born again, quickned or regenerated, there is moreover neceſſary an effectual, irreſiſtible work of the holy Ghoſt upon the whole ſoul, for the producing in them a new ſpiritual life, without which no other means are ſufficient for their converſion unto God.

CHAP. XXI.

Of Chriſtian Liberty, and Liberty of Conſcience.

THe Liberty which Chriſt hath purchaſed for Believers under the Goſpel, conſiſts in their freedom from the guilt of ſin, the condemning wrath of God, the rigor and curſe of the Law, and in their being delivered from this preſent evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of ſin, from the evil of afflictions, the fear and ſting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlaſting damnation; as alſo in their free acceſs to God, and their yielding obedience unto him, not out of ſlaviſh fear, but a childe-like

love and willing minde: All which were common also to Believers under the Law, for the substance of them; but under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is further inlarged in their freedom from the yoak of the Ceremonial Law, the whole Legal administration of the Covenant of Grace, to which the Jewish Church was subjected, and in greater boldness of access to the throne of Grace, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, then Believers under the Law did ordinarily partake of.

II.

God alone is Lord of the Conscience, and hath left it free from the Doctrines and Commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his Word, or not contained in it; so that to believe such Doctrines, or to obey such Commands out of conscience, is to betray true Liberty of Conscience; and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blinde obedience, is to destroy Liberty of Conscience, and Reason also.

III.

They who upon pretence of Christian Liberty do practise any sin, or cherish any lust, as they do thereby pervert the main designe of the Grace of the Gospel to their own destruction; so they wholly destroy the end of Christian Liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Of religious Worship, and the Sabbath-day.

I. THe light of Nature sheweth that there is a God, who hath Lordship and Soveraignty over all, is just, good, and doth good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart, and all the soul, and with all the might: But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture.

II. Religious Worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, and to him alone; not to Angels, Saints, or any other Creatures; and since the Fall, not without a Mediator, nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.

III. Prayer with thanksgiving, being one special part of natural worship, is by God required of all men; but that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son by the help of his Spirit, according to his will, with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and when with others in a known tongue.

IV.

Prayer is to be made for things lawful, and for all ſorts of men living, or that ſhall live hereafter, but not for the dead, nor for thoſe of whom it may be known that they have ſinned the ſin unto death.

V.

The reading of the Scriptures, Preaching, and hearing the word of God, ſinging of Pſalms, as alſo the adminiſtration of Baptiſm and the Lords Suppet, are all parts of religious Worſhip of God, to be performed in obedience unto God with underſtanding, faith, reverence, and godly fear: Solemn Humiliations, with Faſtings and Thankſgiving upon ſpecial occaſions, are in their ſeveral times and ſeaſons to be uſed in a holy and religious maner.

VI.

Neither Prayer nor any other part of religious Worſhip, is now under the Goſpel either tyed unto, or made more acceptable by any place, in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed; but God is to be worſhipped every where in ſpirit and in truth, as in private families dayly, and in ſecret each one by himſelf, ſo more ſolemnly in the publique aſſemblies, which are not careleſly nor wilfully to be neglected, or forſaken, when God by his Word or Providence calleth thereunto.

VII.

As it is of the law of Nature, that in general a proportion of time by Gods appointment be ſet apart for the worſhip of God; ſo by his Word in a poſitive, moral, and perpetual

petual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seaven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lords day, and is to be continued to the end of the World as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.

VIII.

This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs beforehand, do not onely observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly imployments and recreations, but also are taken up the whole time in the publique and private exercises of his Worship, and in the duties of Necessity and Mercy.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of lawful Oaths and Vows.

A Lawful Oath is a part of religious Worship, wherein the person swearing in truth, righteousnes and judgement, solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth or promiseth, and to judge him according to the truth or falshood of what he sweareth.

II. The

II.

The name of God onely is that by which men ought to ſwear, and therein it is to be uſed with all holy fear and reverence: Therefore to ſwear vainly, or raſhly, by that glorious or dreadful name, or to ſwear at all by any other thing, is ſinful and to be abhorred; yet as in matters of weight and moment an Oath is warranted by the Word of God under the new Teſtament, as well as under the Old; ſo a lawful Oath, being impoſed by lawful authority in ſuch matters, ought to be taken.

III.

Whoſoever taketh an Oath warranted by the Word of God, ought duly to conſider the weightineſs of ſo ſolemn an act, and therein to avouch nothing but what he is fully perſwaded is the truth: neither may any man binde himſelf by Oath to any thing, but what is good and juſt, and what he believeth ſo to be, and what he is able and reſolved to perform. Yet it is a ſin to refuſe an Oath touching any thing that is good and juſt, being lawfully impoſed by Authority.

IV.

An Oath is to be taken in the plain and common ſenſe of the words, without equivocation or mental reſervation: It cannot oblige to ſin, but in any thing not ſinful, being taken it bindes to performance, although to a mans own hurt; nor is it to be violated, although made to Hereticks or Infidels.

V.

A Vow, which is not to be made to any Creature, but God alone, is of the like nature with a promissory Oath, and ought to be made with the like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness.

VI.

Popish monastical Vows of perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious and sinful snares, in which no Christian may intangle himself.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of the Civil Magistrate.

GOd the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil Magistrates to be under him, over the people for his own glory and the publique good; and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defence and incouragement of them that do good, and for the punishment of evil doers.

II.

It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the Office of a Magistrate, when called thereunto: in the management whereof, as they ought specially to maintain Justice and Peace, according to the wholsome Laws of each Commonwealth; so for that end they may lawfully now

under the new Teſtament wage war upon juſt and neceſſary occaſion.

III.

Although the Magiſtrate is bound to incourage, promote, and protect the profeſſor and profeſſion of the Goſpel, and to manage and order civil adminiſtrations in a due ſubſerviency to the intereſt of Chriſt in the world, and to that end to take care that men of corrupt mindes and converſations do not licentiouſly publiſh and divulge Blaſphemy and Errors in their own nature, ſubverting the faith, and inevitably deſtroying the ſouls of them that receive them: Yet in ſuch differences about the Doctrines of the Goſpel, or ways of the worſhip of God, as may befall men exerciſing a good conſcience, manifeſting it in their converſation, and holding the foundation, not diſturbing others in their ways or worſhip that differ from them; there is no warrant for the Magiſtrate under the Goſpel to abridge them of their liberty.

IV.

It is the duty of people to pray for Magiſtrates, to honor their perſons, to pay them Tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be ſubject to their Authority for conſcience ſake. Infidelity, or difference in Religion, doth not make void the Magiſtrates juſt and legal Authority, nor free the people from theiir obedience to him: from which eccleſiaſtical perſons are not exempted, much leſs hath the Pope any power or juriſdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people, and leaſt of all to deprive them of their dominions or lives, if he ſhall judge them to be Hereticks, or upon any other pretence whatſoever.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Of Marriage.

MArriage is to be between one man and one woman: neither is it lawful for any man to have more then one wife, nor for any woman to have more then one husband at the ſame time.

II.

Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increaſe of mankinde with a legitimate iſſue, and of the Church with an holy ſeed, and for preventing of uncleanneſs.

III.

It is lawful for all ſorts of people to marry, who are able with judgement to give their conſent. Yet it is the duty of Chriſtians to marry in the Lord, and therefore ſuch as profeſs the true Reformed religion, ſhould not marry with Infidels, Papiſts, or other Idolaters: neither ſhould ſuch as are godly, be unequally yoaked by marrying with ſuch as are wicked in their life, or maintain damnable Hereſie.

IV.

Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of conſanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word; nor can ſuch inceſtuous Marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man, or conſent of parties, ſo as thoſe perſons may live together as man and wife.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the Church.

THe Catholique or Universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the Elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ, the Head thereof, and is the Spouse, the Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all

II.

The whole body of men throughout the world, professing the faith of the Gospel and obedience unto God by Christ according unto it, not destroying their own profession by any Errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are, and may be called the visible Catholique Church of Christ, although as such it is not intrusted with the administration of any Ordinances, or have any offices to rule or govern in, or over the whole Body.

III.

The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error, and some have so degenerated as to become no Churches of Christ, but Synagogues of Satan: Nevertheless Christ always hath had, and ever shall have a visible Kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his name.

IV.

There is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be Head

Head thereof; but it is that Antichriſt, that man of ſin, and ſon of perdition, that exalteth himſelf in the Church againſt Chriſt, and all that is called God, whom the Lord ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming.

V.

As the Lord in his care and love towards his Church, hath in his infinite wiſe providence exerciſed it with great variety in all ages, for the good of them that love him, and his own Glory: ſo according to his promiſe, we expect that in the later days, Antichriſt being deſtroyed, the Jews called, and the adverſaries of the Kingdom of his dear Son broken, the Churches of Chriſt being inlarged and edified through a free and plentiful communication of light and grace, ſhall enjoy in this world a more quiet, peaceable and glorious condition then they have enjoyed.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the Communion of Saints.

ALl Saints that are united to Jeſus Chriſt their Head, by his Spirit and Faith, although they are not made thereby one perſon with him, have fellowſhip in his Graces, Sufferings, Death, Reſurrection and Glory: and being united to one another in love, they have communion in each others gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of ſuch duties, publique and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward Man.

II.

All Saints are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the Worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities: which communion, though especially to be exercised by them in the relations wherein they stand, whether in Families or Churches, yet as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who in every place call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of the Sacraments.

SAcraments are holy Signs and Seals of the Covenant of Grace, immediately instituted by Christ, to represent him and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him, and solemnly to engage us to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.

II.

There is in every Sacrament a spiritual relation, or sacramental union between the signe and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.

III.

The grace which is exhibited in or by the Sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them, neither dot

doth the efficacy of a Sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the work of the Spirit, and the word of Institution, which contains together with a Precept authorizing the use thereof, a Promise of benefit to worthy receivers.

IV.

There be onely two Sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Lords Supper; neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a Minister of the Word lawfully called.

V.

The Sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were for substance the same with those of the New.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of Baptism.

BAptism is a Sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ to be unto the party baptized a signe and seal of the Covenant of Grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life; which Ordinance is by Christs own appointment to be continued in his Church until the end of the world.

II.

The outward Element to be used in this Ordinance, is Water.

Water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost, by a Minister of the Gospel lawfully called.

III.

Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary, but Baptism is rightly administred by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.

IV.

Not onely those that do actually profess faith in, and obedience unto Christ, but also the Infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized, and those onely.

V.

Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this Ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it; or that all that are baptized, are undoubtedly regenerated.

VI.

The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administred, yet notwithstanding, by the right use of this Ordinance, the grace promised is not onely offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the holy Ghost to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of Gods own Will in his appointed time.

VII.

Baptism is but once to be administred to any person.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Of the Lords Supper.

OUr Lord Jesus in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, called the Lords Supper, to be observed in his Churches unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance, and shewing forth of the Sacrifice of himself in his death, the sealing of all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nouishment, and growth in him, their further ingagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him, and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other.

II.

In this Sacrament Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real Sacrifice made at all for remission of sin of the quick or dead, but onely a memorial of that one offering up of himself by himself upon the Cross once for all, and a spiritual Oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same; so that the Popish Sacrifice of the Mass (as they call it) is most abominable, injurious to Christs own onely Sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the Elect.

III.

The Lord Jesus hath in this Ordinance appointed his Ministers to pray and bless the Elements of Bread and Wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use, and to take and break the Bread, to take the Cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give

both to the Communicants, but to none who are not then present in the Congregation.

IV.

Private Masses, or receiving the Sacrament by a Priest, or any other alone, as likewise the denial of the Cup to the people, worshiping the Elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about for adoration, and the reserving them for any pretended religious use, are all contrary to the nature of this Sacrament, and to the Institution of Christ.

V.

The outward Elements in this Sacrament duely set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him Crucified, as that truely, yet Sacramentally onely, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the Body and Blood of Christ; albeit in substance and nature they still remain truly and onely Bread and Wine as they were before.

VI.

That Doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of Bread and Wine into the substance of Christs Body and Blood (commonly called Transubstantiation) by consecration of a Priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason, overthroweth the nature of the Sacrament, and hath been, and is the cause of manifold Superstitions, yea of gross Idolatries.

VII.

Worthy Receivers outwardly partaking of the visible Elements

Elements in this Sacrament, do then also inwardly by Faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death; the Body and Blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally in, with, or under the Bread or Wine; yet as really, but spiritually present to the Faith of Believers in that Ordinance, as the Elements themselves are to their outward senses.

VIII.

All ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ, so are they unworthy of the Lords Table, and cannot without great sin against him, whilest they remain such, partake of these holy Mysteries, or be admitted thereunto; yea whosoever shall receive unworthily, are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, eating and drinking Judgement to themselves.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the state of Man after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead.

THe Bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption, but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them, the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest Heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies: And

the souls of the wicked are cast into Hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to the Judgement of the great day: Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

II.

At the last day such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed, and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies, and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls for ever.

III.

The bodies of the unjust shall by the Power of Christ be raised to dishonor; the bodies of the just by his Spirit unto honor, and be made conformable to his own glorious Body.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the last Judgement.

GOd hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the World in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all Power and Judgement is given of the Father; in which day not onely the Apostate Angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth, shall appear before the Tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words and deeds, and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.

II. The

II.

The end of Gods appointing this day, is for the manifeſtation of the Glory of his Mercy in the eternal ſalvation of the Elect, and of his Juſtice in the damnation of the Reprobate, who are wicked and diſobedient: for then ſhall the righteous go into everlaſting Life, and receive that fulneſs of joy and glory, with everlaſting reward in the preſence of the Lord; but the wicked who know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall be caſt into eternal torments, and be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his Power.

III.

As Chriſt would have us to be certainly perſwaded that there ſhall be a Judgement, both to deter all men from ſin, and for the greater conſolation of the godly in their adverſity; ſo will he have that day unknown to men, that they may ſhake off all carnal ſecurity, and be always watchful, becauſe they know not at what hour the Lord will come, and may be ever prepared to ſay, Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly. Amen.

II.

The end of God's appointing this day, is for the manifestation of the Glory of his Mercy in the eternal salvation of the Elect, and of his Justice in the damnation of the Reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient: for then shall the righteous go into everlasting Life, and receive that fulness of joy and glory with everlasting reward in the presence of the Lord: but the wicked who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his Power.

III.

As Christ would have us to be certainly perswaded that there shall be a Judgement, both to deter all mankind from sin, and to comfort the godly in their adversity: so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come, and may be ever prepared to say, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

Of the INSTITUTION of CHURCHES, And the ORDER Appointed in them by JESUS CHRIST.

I.

BY the appointment of the Father all Power for the Calling, Institution, Order, or Government of the Church, is invested in a Supreme and Soveraign maner in the Lord Jesus Christ, as King and Head thereof.

II.

In the execution of this Power wherewith he is so entrusted, the Lord Jesus calleth out of the World unto Communion with himself, those that are given unto him by his Father, that they may walk before him in all the ways of Obedience, which he prescribeth to them in his Word.

III. Those

III.

Thoſe thus called (through the Miniſtery of the Word by his Spirit) he commandeth to walk together in particular Societies or Churches, for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that publique Worſhip, which he requireth of them in this world.

IV.

To each of theſe Churches thus gathered, according unto his minde declared in his Word, he hath given all that Power and Authority, which is any way needfull for their carrying on that Order in Worſhip and Diſcipline, which he hath inſtituted for them to obſerve with Commands and Rules, for the due and right exerting and executing of that Power.

V.

Theſe particular Churches thus appointed by the Authority of Chriſt, and intruſted with power from him for the ends before expreſſed, are each of them as unto thoſe ends, the ſeat of that Power which he is pleaſed to communicate to his Saints or Snbjects in this world, ſo that as ſuch they receive it immediately from himſelf.

VI.

Beſides theſe particular Churches, there is not inſtituted by Chriſt any Church more extenſive or Catholique entruſted with power for the adminiſtration of his Ordinances, or the execution of any authority in his name.

VII.

A particular Church gathered and compleated according to the minde of Christ, consists of Officers and Members: The Lord Christ having given to his called ones (united according to his appointment in Church-order) Liberty and Power to choose Persons fitted by the holy Ghost for that purpose, to be over them, and to minister to them in the Lord.

VIII.

The Members of these Churches are Saints by Calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their profession and walking) their obedience unto that Call of Christ, who being further known to each other by their confession of the Faith wrought in them by the power of God, declared by themselves or otherwise manifested, do willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord, and to one another by the will of God in professed subjection to the Ordinances of the Gospel.

IX.

The Officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the Church so called, and gathered for the peculiar administration of Ordinances, and execution of Power or Duty which he intrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are Pastors, Teachers, Elders, and Deacons.

X.

Churches thus gathered and assembling for the Worship of God, are thereby visible and publique, and their As-

ſemblies (in what place ſoever they are, according as they have liberty or opportunity) are therefore Church or Publique Aſſemblies.

XI.

The way appointed by Chriſt for the calling of any perſon, fitted and gifted by the holy Ghoſt, unto the Office of Paſtor, Teacher or Elder in a Church, is, that he be choſen thereunto by the common ſuffrage of the Church it ſelf, and ſolemnly ſet apart by Faſting and Prayer, with Impoſition of Hands of the Elderſhip of that Church, if there be any before conſtituted therein: And of a Deacon, that he be choſen by the like ſuffrage, and ſet apart by Prayer, and the like Impoſition of Hands.

XII.

The Eſſence of this Call of a Paſtor, Teacher or Elder unto Office, conſiſts in the Election of the Church, together with his acceptation of it, and ſeparation *by Faſting and Prayer*: And thoſe who are ſo choſen, though not ſet apart by Impoſition of Hands, are rightly conſtituted Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe Name and Authority they exerciſe the Miniſtery to them ſo committed. The Calling of Deacons conſiſteth in the like Election and acceptation, with ſeparation *by Prayer*.

XIII.

Although it be incumbent on the Paſtors and Teachers of the Churches to be inſtant in Preaching the Word, by way of Office; yet the work of Preaching the Word is not ſo peculiarly confined to them, but that others alſo gifted and fitted by the holy Ghoſt for it, and approved (being by lawful

lawful ways and means in the Providence of God called thereunto) may publiquely, ordinarily and constantly perform it; so that they give themselves up thereunto.

XIV.

However, they who are ingaged in the work of Publique Preaching, and enjoy the Publique Maintenance upon that account, are not thereby obliged to dispense the Seals to any other then such as (being Saints by Calling, and gathered according to the Order of the Gospel) they stand related to, as Pastors or Teachers; yet ought they not to neglect others living within their Parochial Bounds, but besides their constant publique Preaching to them, they ought to enquire after their profiting by the Word, instructing them in, and pressing upon them (whether young or old) the great Doctrines of the Gospel, even personally and particularly, so far as their strength and time will admit.

XV.

Ordination alone without the Election or precedent consent of the Church, by those who formerly have been Ordained by vertue of that Power they have received by their Ordination, doth not constitute any person a Church-Officer, or communicate Office-power unto him.

XVI.

A Church furnished with Officers (according to the minde of Christ) hath full power to administer all his Ordinances; and where there is want of any one or more Officers required, that Officer, or those which are in the Church, may administer all the Ordinances proper to their particular Duty and Offices; but where there are no teach-

ing Officers, none may administer the Seals, nor can the Church authorize any so to do.

XVII.

In the carrying on of Church-administrations, no person ought to be added to the Church, but by the consent of the Church it self; that so love (without dissimulation) may be preserved between all the Members thereof.

XVIII.

Whereas the Lord Jesus Christ hath appointed and instituted as a means of Edification, that those who walk not according to the Rules and Laws appointed by him (in respect of Faith and Life, so that just offence doth arise to the Church thereby) be censured in his Name and Authority; Every Church hath Power in it self to exercise and execute all those Censures appointed by him in the way and Order prescribed in the Gospel.

XIX.

The Censures so appointed by Christ, are Admonition and Excommunication: and whereas some offences are or may be known onely to some, it is appointed by Christ, that those to whom they are so known, do first admonish the offender in private: in publique offences where any sin, before all; or in case of non-amendment upon private admonition, the offence being related to the Church, and the offender not manifesting his repentance, he is to be duely admonished in the Name of Christ by the whole Church, by the Ministery of the Elders of the Church; and if this Censure prevail not for his repentance, then he is to be cast out by Excommunication with the consent of the Church.

XX. As

XX.

As all Believers are bound to joyn themſelves to particular Churches, when and where they have opportunity ſo to do, ſo none are to be admitted unto the Priviledges of the Churches, who do not ſubmit themſelves to the Rule of Chriſt in the Cenſures for the Government of them.

XXI.

This being the way preſcribed by Chriſt in caſe of offence, no Church-members upon any offences taken by them, having performed their duty required of them in this matter, ought to diſturb any Church-order, or abſent themſelves from the publique Aſſemblies, or the Adminiſtration of any Ordinances upon that pretence, but to wait upon Chriſt in the further proceeding of the Church.

XXII.

The Power of Cenſures being ſeated by Chriſt in a particular Church, is to be exerciſed onely towards particular Members of each Church reſpectively as ſuch; and there is no power given by him unto any Synods or Eccleſiaſtical Aſſemblies to Excommunicate, or by their publique Edicts to threaten Excommunication, or other Church-cenſures againſt Churches, Magiſtrates, or their people upon any account, no man being obnoxious to that Cenſure, but upon his perſonal miſcarriage, as a Member of a particular Church.

XXIII.

Although the Church is a Society of men, aſſembling for

for the celebration of the Ordinances according to the appointment of Christ, yet every Society assembling for that end or purpose, upon the account of cohabitation within any civil Precincts and Bounds, is not thereby constituted a Church, seeing there may be wanting among them, what is essentially required thereunto; and therefore a Believer living with others in such a Precinct, may joyn himself with any Church for his edification.

XXIV.

For the avoiding of Differences that may otherwise arise, for the greater Solemnity in the Celebration of the Ordinances of Christ, and the opening a way for the larger usefulness of the Gifts and Graces of the holy Ghost; Saints living in one City or Town, or within such distances as that they may conveniently assemble for divine Worship, ought rather to joyn in one Church for their mutual strengthning and edification, then to set up many distinct Societies.

XXV.

As all Churches and all the Members of them are bound to pray continually for the good or prosperity of all the Churches of Christ in all places, and upon all occasions to further it; (Every one within the bounds of their Places and Callings, in the exercise of their Gifts and Graces;) So the Churches themselves (when planted by the providence of God, so as they may have oppertunity and advantage for it) ought to hold communion amongst themselves for their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.

XXVI. In

XXVI.

In Cases of Difficulties or Differences, either in point of Doctrine or in Administrations, wherein either the Churches in general are concerned, or any one Church in their Peace, Union, and Edification, or any Member or Members of any Church are injured in, or by any proceeding in Censures, not agreeable to Truth and Order: it is according to the minde of Christ, that many Churches holding communion together, do by their Messengers meet in a Synod or Councel, to consider and give their advice in, or about that matter in difference, to be reported to all the Churches concerned; Howbeit these Synods so assembled are not entrusted with any Church-Power, properly so called, or with any Jurisdiction over the Churches themselves, to exercise any Censures, either over any Churches or Persons, or to impose their determinations on the Churches or Officers.

XXVII.

Besides these occasional Synods or Councels, there are not instituted by Christ any stated Synods in a fixed Combination of Churches, of their Officers in lesser or greater Assemblies, nor are there any Synods appointed by Christ in a way of Subordination to one another.

XXVIII.

Persons that are joyned in Church-fellowship, ought not lightly or without just cause to withdraw themselves from the communion of the Church whereunto they are so joyned: Nevertheless, where any person cannot continue in any Church without his sin, either for want of the Administration of any Ordinances instituted by Christ, or by his being

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ing deprived of his due Priviledges, or compelled to any thing in practice not warranted by the Word, or in case of Persecution, or upon the account of conveniency of habitation; he consulting with the Church, or the Officer or Officers thereof, may peaceably depart from the communion of the Church, wherewith he hath so walked, to joyn himself with some other Church, where he may enjoy the Ordinances in the purity of the same, for his edification and consolation.

XXIX.

Such reforming Churches as consist of Persons found in the Faith and of Conversation becoming the Gospel, ought not to refuse the communion of each other, so far as may consist with their own Principles respectively, though they walk not in all things according to the same Rules of Church Order.

XXX.

Churches gathered and walking according to the minde of Christ, judging other Churches (though less pure) to be true Churches, may receive unto occcasional communion with them, such Members of those Churches as are credibly testified to be godly, and to live without offence.

FINIS.